



WFLC PACIFIC ISLANDS FORESTRY COMMITTEE

2024 Annual Report and 2025 Work Plan

LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW

COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP

The Pacific Islands Forestry Committee leadership team for 2024 included:

- Christine Fejeran (Guam), Chair
- Jenny Grimm (HI), Vice-Chair
- Marlyter Silbanuz (FSM), Past Chair
- Amanda Uowolo (Forest Service), Secretary
- Sherry Hazelhurst, USDA Forest Service
- Sara Goodwin, CWSF/WFLC Staff Liaison

The Pacific Islands Forestry Committee leadership team for 2025 includes:

- Christine Fejeran (Guam), Chair
- Jenny Grimm (HI), Vice-Chair
- Marlyter Silbanuz (FSM), Past Chair
- Randon Jack (RMI), Secretary
- Sherry Hazelhurst, USDA Forest Service
- Sara Goodwin, CWSF/WFLC Staff Liaison

MISSION STATEMENT AND PURPOSE

The mission of the Pacific Islands Forestry Committee (PIFC) is to develop informed and equitable approaches to natural and cultural resources and forestry management issues that represent the needs of the forests¹ of Hawai'i and the U.S.-Affiliated Pacific Islands (USAPI). This approach informs the Council of Western State Foresters (CWSF) and Western Forestry Leadership Coalition (WFLC) and ensures that these entities present a unified voice and compelling actions to policymakers, the National Association of State Foresters (NASF), and the Washington Office of the USDA Forest Service (Forest Service), on behalf of the State of Hawai'i, Territories of Guam and American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau with their unique forestry management issues. In addition, the PIFC provides a forum for technology transfer, training, research, learning, and cultural information exchange among USAPI, WFLC, CWSF, NASF, and Forest Service members on topics that concern forests, livelihoods, and impacts of climate change in the region.

¹ Encompasses urban forests, agroforests, mangroves, tropical forests, cultural forests, medicinal forests, native forests, wildlands, planted forests, jungles, wetlands, savannas, and all other forests the committee deems relevant to their body of work.

2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS FROM 2024

- In December 2023, hosted the first Pacific Islands Technical Training Workshop since 2019, with over 100 participants. Action items summarized by program areas were presented at the conclusion of the workshop and shared with attendees for their continued learning and engagement.
 - Christine Camacho Fejeran contributed a blog post following PIFC Workshop (<https://www.thewflc.org/blog/pifc-workshop-collaboration-cohesion-for-professional-development>), and WFLC staff coordinated with PSW Research Station for featured article on PIFC workshop (<https://research.fs.usda.gov/psw/news/featured/caring-people-and-protecting-forests-hawaii-and-u.s.-affiliated-pacific-islands>), resulting in greater awareness of the workshop and the issues facing the Pacific Islands.
- Revised PIFC Charter including updated mission, purpose, duties, and responsibilities. Integrated climate change into the mission.
- Revised and renewed the PIFC strategic plan for 2025-2029.
- Continued the LSR subcompetition for equitable access to funding. One project from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands “Talakhaya Watershed Revegetation Project” was funded for FY2024.
- Provided WUI and LSR scorers informational materials on the Pacific Islands to better educate on unique conditions on the islands and inform the scoring process.
- Increased Pacific Island representation at CWSF/WFLC Committees and committee report-outs at quarterly PIFC meetings.
- Finalized the development of 16 communication products (www.bit.ly/pifc_comms) with WFLC staff.
- Contributed content for CWSF/WFLC website and newsletter. Examples include:
 - Larry Mamis featured as the Meet a Forester for March 2024 newsletter (<https://www.thewflc.org/blog/meet-forester-larry-mamis>)
 - American Samoa featured on CWSF's BIL IRA webpage (<https://www.westernforesters.org/bil-and-ira-state-forestry-stories>)
- Held in-person 2024 PIFC Executive Committee meeting in Majuro, Marshall Islands. Topics included Forest Action Plan funding and 5-year review, Hawai'i and Pacific Islands Chapter of the 5th National Climate Assessment and Pacific Drought Knowledge Exchange, Agroforestry and the Changing Climate, Research, Capacity Building, and Education, among others.
 - While in Majuro, attendees participated in the 2024 World Food Day and Pandanus Revival Festival, organized by the Republic of the Marshall Islands Ministry of Natural Resources & Commerce.
- Discussed Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle (CRB) during the July quarterly PIFC meeting. Following the meeting, distributed member survey and collected CRB data to present to the CWSF Forest Health Committee. Initiated discussions on a multi-island project to address CRB given that it is a high-priority issue.
- Received presentation on climate justice from Ashley McGuigan (Climate and Agroforestry Extension Faculty with the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Management).
- Received presentation from Dana Shapiro (CEO, Hawai'i 'Ulu Cooperative) on breadfruit cooperatives and opportunities.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION BY STATE FORESTERS

- Recommendation for State Foresters continued support for equitable access by US-Affiliated Pacific Islands to competitive and noncompetitive federal funding and program direction.
- Recommendation for State Foresters to approve the Pacific Islands Forestry Committee 2025 Work Plan.

2025 WORK PLAN

MEETING(S) AND CALLS PLANNED FOR 2025

- Quarterly Zoom meetings in January, April, July, and October for 1.25 hours. Quarterly meetings to include committee report-outs, calendar check, and guest speakers/topics as decided by the PIFC Executive Committee.
- In-Person Annual Meeting: September 19-20, 2025 in Kona, HI following the 2025 NASF Annual Meeting.

KEY ACTIVITIES, DELIVERABLES, AND OUTCOMES PLANNED FOR 2025

- Continue updating and tracking funding opportunities within the grant spreadsheet. Expand the spreadsheet to include non-USFS opportunities, such as FEMA.
- Track and share policy items, particularly the Farm Bill, with any new or continued program authorities that would assist the PIFC members in their work on the ground.
- Begin planning for an opportunity to support Pacific Island members that would align with the Forest Products Committee grant - potential to explore strategy and economic opportunities for coconut and pandanus (byproducts) and breadfruit sustainability.
- Develop PIFC CRB handout and graphics - expand on communications products similar to the developed little fire ant graphics for use across the islands, translate into local languages.
- Coordination with DOI on invasive species opportunities and products.
- Invite the Pacific Island Climate Adaptation Science Center (PI-CASC) to a quarterly call to explore enhanced partnership opportunities.
- Ensure maximum use of LSR PIFC subcompetition.
 - Explore the potential of a multi-island LSR project to address CRB.
- Identify training needs and coordinate on-island trainings to meet the identified needs.
- Collaborate with DACUM (an acronym for Developing a Curriculum) project.
- Develop key messaging that highlights the needs and importance of forests in the region, suitable for both external and internal audiences, with a target completion by the 2025 NASF Annual Meeting.
 - Organize at least one call to begin developing island-crafted messages.
- Explore the potential of a PIFC Exhibitor Table and/or panel at the 2025 NASF Annual Meeting.
- Explore hazard mitigation planning opportunities and needs.
 - Coordinate funding and planning for CWPP completion on another island.
 - Aim for at least two applications for CWDG or request for SFA/WUI grants in support of this.
- Explore the use of UCF grant funding to support traditional ecological knowledge generational transfer.
- Share lessons learned/data collection/resources post-disaster, particularly for FEMA support.
 - Explore FEMA/USAID speakers for quarterly meetings or in between quarterly meetings for applicable islands (certain islands can only work with USAID and not FEMA). Potential topics include mitigation, response, and recovery.
- Continue dialogue with USFS on research needs for the islands.
- Develop a list of available Pacific Island resources and tools (i.e. soil moisture, tree canopy coverage, urban map/heat map). Include WFLC-created materials, USFS products, and partner resources. Indicate contact information for each product and information on use/practical application.